

TASK 4

You are going to read an article about instant messaging. 7 paragraphs have been removed from the article. Choose from paragraphs A-I the one which best fits each gap (1-7). There are two extra paragraphs that you do not need to use. Write your answers in the answer boxes provided at the end of the exercise.

BlackBerry: is this RIP* for BBM (BlackBerry Messenger) ?

The Canadian phone remains a popular budget option. But the shiny, happy people holding handsets have all moved on.

Back in 2005, when BlackBerry brought instant messaging to the mobile phone, the company was just entering its boom times. While the iPhone was still a gleam in Steve Jobs' eye, BlackBerry's innovations ensured its smart phone joined maple syrup on the list of Canada's biggest exports.

1

But two years later, it is the users themselves who are pulling the plug. As demand for BlackBerry handsets fades, the once noisy BBM grapevine is falling silent. Dozens of alternatives have sprung up to take its place, from Facebook and Apple's own-brand instant messaging applications to independent startups such as WhatsApp and Kik (which also hails from Canada).

2

In an attempt to retain its following, BBM was last week released on Android and Apple phones. Despite the competition, the response has been overwhelming, with an announcement that there have been more than 20m downloads. But despite the initial interest, many believe BBM's wider release will do little to save the service.

3

BBM claims 80 million monthly users after its upgrade, but WhatsApp has 300 million. Other services expose BBM's limitations: unlike Skype and Viber, it does not yet offer video or voice calls. Unlike Path, it does not do location sharing. There is no video sharing, as on iMessage. And the stickers (a more sophisticated version of the smiley face) adored by kids the world over are also unforgivably absent. Even the contacts and calendar sharing that BBM made possible on BlackBerry handsets have not migrated to the Apple and Android versions.

4

Yet only three years ago, BBM was so powerful it was credited with starting a revolution in Egypt; and at the time of the London riots, it was a more urgent source of news than the television screen.

5

Nowadays, Moore's main form of communication is the iPad. He dismisses the notion that the BBM curfew, which was subsequently urged by a group of MPs, would have been an effective way to put an end to the looting.

6

Yet for the young people around the karting track, no single alternative with the same viral power, the ability to connect a generation on one platform, has replaced BBM. "There's too many things now. I'm on WhatsApp, iMessage, Instagram, Kik. Every year a new one comes out," says Moore. "It's a much more complex, multi-faceted environment," says Benedict Evans, a digital media specialist at Enders. "The smartphone itself has become the platform. All of these apps plug into your phone book and your photo library. Apps rise and fall like fireworks. Some, like Instagram, last, others disappear into thin air."

7

Across town from Stockwell, outside the gates of a private school in well-heeled South Kensington, the older pupils all have Apple logos on their handsets. They all use WhatsApp. For many, BBM is a distant memory. "I still have a Blackberry, but I'm the only one," says a teenager standing with a circle of friends. And how does that make him feel?

"Isolated," he replies.

*Rest In Peace

Paragraphs:

- A. "The move to bring BlackBerry to the iPhone is four or five years too late," says James Gooderson, an 18-year-old classical civilisation student at Nottingham University who blogs on technology. "WhatsApp has captured the reason why young people would use a BlackBerry."
- B. BBM can boast of having the best privacy and security features, partly due to the fact that the phones started off as business communication devices.
- C. But trust in the privacy of BBM's system has been eroded. Part of the attraction to business people, revolutionaries, demonstrators and rioters was a belief that encrypted words sent over the company's secure servers could not be traced back to their writers. Prosecutions after the riots put an end to that belief.
- D. However, the major shift nowadays has been from verbal to visual. Photos uploaded to Instagram trigger a wave of comments and Snapchat's pictures, which self-delete after 10 seconds, have opened a world of other possibilities. Like BBM, all of these services are free for any phone with an internet connection.
- E. Six years later, in the summer of 2011, as violence engulfed London and spread to Birmingham, Nottingham, Liverpool and Manchester, so effective was BlackBerry Messenger (BBM) at mobilising the rioters that politicians called for the service to be temporarily shut down.
- F. "We could see on our BlackBerry messages where the rioters were going next; TV news would catch up four hours later," said Jean-Pierre Moore, 28. He manages the karting track at Oasis youth club in Stockwell, south London, an area with some of the highest levels of crime and economic deprivation in Britain.
- G. Then came a new generation of competing smartphones, and suddenly the BlackBerry looked ancient. Apple debuted the iPhone in 2007 and showed that phones can handle much more than email and phone calls. In the years since, BlackBerry Ltd. has been hammered by competition from the iPhone as well as Android-based rivals.
- H. Free to download and use (although WhatsApp costs \$1 a year after the first year), they use the internet to swap text messages, pictures, voice clips, "stickers", and even videos in WhatsApp's case, between most types of phones.
- I. "The social networking wasn't the reason," he says. "I know a lot of people who were out rioting. People had been angry for a long time. Mention the words stop and search around here, and you immediately have a room full of angry young men."

| Gap | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. | 6. | 7. |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Paragraph | | | | | | | |
| Teacher only | | | | | | | |

soluciones

TASK 4

| Gap | 1. | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. | 6. | 7. |
|------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Paragraph | E | G | A | D | F | I | C |